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Human Rights and Community Development in a U.S. Army Village in Okinawa

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Introduction

Approximately 909 United States military facilities and 190,000 troops, located in 46 countries, represent the unparalleled 'bases of empire' today (Lutz 2009:1). The presence of Uncle Sam has been the reality for the post-World War II Asia-Pacific region, especially in Japan, Korea and the Philippines (also in Thailand and Australia). Detrimental impacts on local societies inflicted by the U.S. military presence are recognised most commonly in terms of a diplomatic thorn in the side of stable bilateral alliances between the U.S. and the host countries of its troops. When local residents' safety, dignity and well-being are threatened by U.S. military accidents and crimes, I argue, it is the 'human rights' of the individual residents that are being violated by the state.

This article examines how community development has contributed to partially reclaiming human rights in a village in central Okinawa. Yomitan Village has been living with active U.S. military bases for more than sixty years since the end of World War II. Its 'village revitalization' movement since the 1980s has successfully resisted the expansion of U.S. military trainings by constructing a 'cultural village' that integrates economic, spiritual, ecological and creative aspects of community living. Against the enthusiasm for modernisation led by the construction boom in the 1970-80s Japan and Okinawa, Yomitan Village has deliberately revitalised a village of farming, traditional arts and crafts: an antithesis to the military's culture of war and destruction. Ironically, Yomitan today is a popular temporary dwelling site among U.S. military members and other 'expats' attracted by the idyllic landscape and unique culture.

Community development processes have improved the *collective* human rights in Yomitan Village: the villagers have claimed the rights to develop the culture and tradition unique to the village, which the Japanese state has been unable to protect from the conflicting demands of the U.S. military. However, these processes have had insufficient effect on reclaiming the *individual* human rights. Individual citizens are still not fully protected from the military presence. Yomitan today is a peculiar Okinawan village with a thriving cultural tradition that attracts outsiders, where, disturbingly, individual rights of the locals are disrespected. The controversy to do with U.S. military bases in Japan in particular has excessively focused on state-to-state legal and diplomatic solutions, with little perspective on individual human rights. Yomitan's experience demonstrates the importance of community development that focuses on the collective rights of hosting communities of U.S. military bases, whilst nevertheless revealing the challenge of protecting individual rights.

1. Yomitan's community development as civil disobedience against the U.S. military and Japanese colonialism

'Okinawa' is a name used in reference to the southernmost archipelago that was once a separate political entity: the Ryukyu Kingdom (1429–1879).¹ Ryukyu was annexed by Japan as one of its border territories of the expanding empire before World War II (Morris-Suzuki 1996; Oguma 1998).² Since 1945, Okinawa has been a U.S. military colony known as the 'Keystone of the Pacific': a spoil of World War II. Okinawa was separated from Japan, under direct U.S. military administration from 1952–1972. Following Okinawa's return to Japan, the U.S. Forces still continued to occupy 20% of land surface of Okinawa Main Island as well as multiple coastal and aerial training zones. These areas are off-limits to the local residents, whereas U.S. military personnel can legitimately go anywhere. The U.S. military occupation of Okinawa is a testament to Japanese colonialism: Japan exploits Okinawa as its colony to extract perceived benefits of the security alliance with the U.S. by imposing on it a majority (about 75%) of all U.S. Forces of Japan, a level of intensity not seen elsewhere in the country (Nomura 2005).

Yomitan Village is located on the west coast of central Okinawa Main Island (see map above), a particularly attractive place for many visitors. Today, in contrast with the adjacent Onna Village, which is crowded with major resort hotels and facilities obviously catering for mainland Japanese tourists, there is an old-fashioned and dignified feel to the place: farmlands, sugar cane fields, natural beaches, buildings with

Yomitan Village in Okinawa Main Island



traditional Ryukyuan architectural features of red tile roofs, stone walls and pavements. Yet, the presence of the U.S. military is prominent: schoolchildren cheerfully commute along the Army's fence and barbed wire under the intermittent booming aircraft training sound, as if nothing unusual was happening.

The population of Yomitan is over 35,000, divided into 23 districts (*aza*): self-governing micro-units of each under a few thousand resident members. Most *aza* predate World War II, some dating back to the administrative zoning during the Ryukyu Kingdom. In Yomitan, the *aza* organises day-to-day affairs related to education, health, production, death, marriage and cultural events that promote the local craft: pottery, music, dance, food. Funerals and annual rituals happen in the *aza*. A strong sense of community exists in Yomitan, characterised by a population small enough to know each other and to manage autonomous social structures; a sense of belonging and identity; holistic interactions among villagers in the realm of personal development beyond functional ties; members' active engagement in the community; and the existence of a unique local-specific culture that members create, as opposed to consumption of a globalised mass culture (Ife & Tesoriero 2006:96-98).

Today's Yomitan is a product of 'village reconstruction' (*mura okoshi*) under former mayor Yamauchi Tokushin, who was in office between 1974 and 1998. It is a unique experiment of community development beyond the *aza*: an overarching 'Yomitan' identity has developed under the 'village reconstruction' program. The village reconstruction played a crucial role in reclaiming pride and dignity in the village where the villagers' basic rights had been blatantly relegated to secondary rung in relation to the military's activities.

Yomitan village's reconstruction is often praised for successfully instigating sustainable economic development. It is considered to have resisted the prevailing Okinawan predicament: addiction to construction-based economic growth in the 1970-80s financed by the governmental subsidies paid in return for hosting U.S. military bases (for example, Miyamoto 2000; Sasaki 1999). Elsewhere, Okinawa has adopted this model, which irreversibly damaged its unique natural environment, while perpetuating Okinawa's dependent underdevelopment (McCormack 1998). While Yomitan villagers have received rent and base-related subsidies from the government in proportion to the military presence, it promoted agriculture, especially sweet potatoes and sugar cane. It also promoted tourism based on locally-owned land and capital (hotels and golf courses), rather than construction and dependence on mainland Japanese resort corporations, which is exceptional in Okinawa (Tanji 2009; Banasick 2005; Sasaki 1999).

My focus here is how the village has reclaimed collective human rights in the process of community development, defined as 'the right to benefit from economic development, the right to community cohesion and harmony' (Ife 2010:114).

Under the U.S. occupation following the Battle of Okinawa, this collective right was clearly denied to the people of Yomitan. In November 1946, when the villagers were allowed to re-settle, 95% of the total area of the village was under US military enclosure, secured for base construction.

Yomitan's community development was strongly inspired by a historiography of the Battle of Okinawa, a particularly bloody final stage of the Asia Pacific War, informed by the villagers' experiences of collective suffering. About 180,000 US soldiers landed on the coast in this village in April 1945. From Yomitan, war on the Island proceeded southward (Yomitan Sonshi Henshu Iinkai 2002:86, 90). During the Battle of Okinawa, both U.S. and mainland Japanese soldiers threatened villagers' lives. Japanese soldiers deprived civilians of food and killed many, accusing them of being 'spies'. In one of the natural limestone caves across Okinawa Main Island, where residents took refuge following the US landing in April 1945, 82 Yomitan villagers (including 47 children) committed 'compulsory group suicide' using grenades, knives and bare hands. In the mid-1980s, however, villagers obtained Yomitan survivors' oral history and recorded their experience. The danger of conforming with the Japanese imperial ethos is repeatedly highlighted: affected by the imperial education that glorifies suicides and the shame attached to being captured by enemies, many family members committed the insane act of killing their loved ones (Field 1993:66-87). At the time, some villagers condemned the local historians for revisiting the scars of the survivors. However, discovering local history played an important role in founding the spiritual basis of rebuilding a new community ethos of '*not to go with the flow*': resisting the post-war Japanese pressure to modernize, urbanise and, importantly, to co-operate in its security policy of concentrating the U.S. military presence in Okinawa (Tanji 2009). These wartime personal experiences are now reflected in the *Yomitan Village History* (Yomitan Sonshi Henshu Iinkai 2002).

The Battle of Okinawa and the ensuing US military occupation in Yomitan are primarily remembered as displacement, fear and humiliation; above all, the disruption of autonomy and communal life. When Yamauchi first became mayor in 1974, more than 70% of the land was still occupied by the U.S. military. Yamauchi experienced the Battle of Okinawa as a child and became a history teacher before being a mayor. He recalls how two weeks after he took office, shrapnel from the Army's explosives disposal field in the village had ended up in the residential area. Ideal locations in the village for the villagers' activities, such as farming and manufacturing, were occupied by the U.S. military. Yamauchi was convinced that to regain the village's collective rights to livelihood and production, it needed to specifically promote culture and agriculture. It was his belief that culture and agriculture stood for creative human activities as opposed to preparation for war and destruction, which the villagers were living with daily (Yamauchi 2007:57;107). Yamauchi's 'village reconstruction' involved four core policies:

- 1) economic development driven by agriculture as a core industry and strategic marketing of local products;
- 2) local ownership that controls environmental resources;
- 3) promotion of Yomitan as a 'cultural village', by promoting local crafts and arts; and
- 4) recovery of land from the US military.

As the mayor led the anti-base struggle, the community held together strongly; the U.S. military conducted dangerous training sessions in Yomitan. Among others, the parachute 'drop' training, conducted 3-4 times a month, most seriously threatened residents' safety. Soldiers and pieces of military equipment were dropped from aircrafts flying 4,000 meters above ground, occasionally landing in residential areas, schools and farms. In 1965, a 10-year-old Yomitan girl was killed, squashed underneath a U.S. trailer dropped during the drop training. Shortly after this tragic incident, Yamauchi recalls, a piece of timber penetrated the roof of a resident's home. Ever since, parachute training threatened residents' livelihood: oil drums fell from the sky into the village; soldiers often shocked farmers by landing on their fields. Each time the training strayed from the Yomitan Auxiliary Airfield (where the training was conducted) into residential areas, Yamauchi appeared at the site and protested (2007:13-14). The parachute training in Yomitan continued to threaten villagers' lives. The mayor and villagers persistently protested against the training: for instance, in November 1981, villagers engaged in civil disobedience, physically blocking the U.S. Marines from reaching the training site (Yamauchi 2007:152-153). The entire village participated in the protest, not just a number of activists: the mayor and village officials, public service

unions, farmers and fishers co-ops, teachers unions, women's organizations, youth groups, and senior citizens groups and *aza* cooperated in solidarity (Yamauchi & Mizushima 1997:15).

In the 1970s, the U.S. Air Force planned to construct a new anti-P3C antenna base. Yamauchi directly petitioned the then commander of the U.S. Marines to stop: even though initially being refused to meet, he waited in front of the restroom to catch him. The commander slowly opened up to him and recounted his own Native American heritage: he also likened the Yomitan Village's struggle to that of his ancestors against the white American settlers. In an open letter, Yamauchi further petitioned then U.S. President Carter to cancel the construction (2007:249-50).³ After three years of villagers' demonstrations and sit-ins organised by *aza* rotations, the military announced the cancellation of the antenna base construction in 1978. Following a similar set of petitions and protests, the village regained the unexploded bombs disposal site and opened the Yomitan Home of Pottery in 1978. This site became a cultural and economic asset of the village, with an old-style pottery kiln and 50 workshops. It has trained and employed young artists and further contributed to locally-owned tourism replacing former US military sites. Furthermore, the mayor embarked on another attempt to build civic facilities for the villagers (a community centre, the village hall and an athletic stadium) at the heart of a U.S. Auxiliary Airfield. Initially this appeared to be a preposterous idea. The mayor justified this idea by stressing the local knowledge of *feng shui* (Yamauchi 2007:5-7). According to the *feng shui* reading, the Airfield is right on the crucial location of the village in relation to the mountains and the

Figure 1 Yomitan Festival, November 2010 (photo taken by author)



ocean, where the spiritual centre of the village is situated and thus appropriate for central public facilities of the village (Tanji 2009). Finally, the Village Office was completed in the middle of the Airfield in 1997. Meanwhile the U.S. and Japanese governments decided to completely close the Airfield in 1996, as well as deciding to relocate the parachute training to Ie Island.⁴ In 2006, the land occupied by the U.S. military in Yomitan gradually fell to approximately 36% (Table 1). The Village Office is now planning the future development of the vacated former Airfield.

Table 1 Ratio of US military bases to the total area of Yomitan Village

Year	Area Occupied by US Military Bases (ha)	Ratio of US military bases (%)
1972	2,440	70.7
1976	1,893	54.9
1989	1,648	46.9
2000	1,567	44.6
2006	1,261	35.9

In reconstructing Yomitan as a ‘cultural village’, Yamauchi stressed the ‘old’ and ‘traditional’ aspects of indigenous arts and lifestyle, in a way that contrasts with what the U.S. military represented during the post-war occupation: modernity and mobility, embodied in its high-tech machinery and mega organization for destruction. Yamauchi made an effort to create an impression for the Americans that sophisticated culture and highly advanced civilization existed in Yomitan (2007:60), as embodied in the traditional weaving, characterised by distinctive flower-patterns specific to Yomitan. Yomitan weaving had existed for 600 years, but

the industry had dwindled and was discontinued during the war. Since the 1960s, local elderly women, who had directly experienced the remaining weaving process, have contributed to the recovery of this skill. The village trained weavers and sponsored exhibitions in major Japanese cities. The sweet potatoes, pottery and weaving industries contribute to Yomitan’s image as a ‘cultural village’ instilling pride and identity in villagers (Yamauchi 2007: 108-9).

Annually, in November, the performing arts, music, martial arts, crafts and the agricultural products, bonsai and local history are showcased in the Yomitan Festival that attracts around 100,000 people. The U.S. Army and Air Force commanders are invited as distinguished guests. Rank and file soldiers also are welcomed (Figure 1). Inviting the U.S. officers, military personnel and their families to cultural events, treating them to the local liquor and cuisines, all expenses paid by the locals, is an important means for the Yomitan villagers to demonstrate to the Americans that they are civilised people, even in many ways culturally superior to the Americans. It is also a way of demonstrating that the villagers are the owners of the village and that the military are but temporary residents, a message that is too often ignored by the states and the military establishments in both nations.

Overall, Yomitan, amongst Okinawan localities living with Uncle Sam, most successfully developed a culture of human rights as constructed in ‘lived experience’ in the community, in ‘*the shared and negotiated understandings of what it means to be human*’ (Ife 2010:78). This requires ‘*an integrated development, whereby social, economic, political, cultural, environmental and personal and spiritual development that represents the essential aspects*’ of community life are addressed (Briskman 2007:162). Jim Ife explains that historically, various groups of people have been defined as



Figure 2
The site of the hit-and-run in Yomitan Auxiliary Airfield, June 2010, photograph taken by the author.

somehow not deserving the same rights of 'humans': 'sub-humans' in the case of Jews in the Holocaust; in the case of Indigenous Australians, being regarded as part of nature rather than humans. The collective rights of the communities are more in danger of being disrespected when they are regarded as racially inferior, backward in the modernity scale or having experienced a history of being colonised (Ife 2010:69-73). The *collective* rights of groups endangered by and living nearby U.S. military deployments are often related to ethnicity, class and colonial conditions. Yomitan's 'village reconstruction' managed to rebuild an identity deriving from a culture and lifestyle indigenous to the place, with a history spanning of more than 600 years. This is what the Americans - and especially its military personnel and their families - do not possess, being constantly stationed in different locations, which is part of their job requirements. Yomitan villagers have demonstrated their dignity as humans, based on cultural sophistication and superiority.

Having said that, community development in Yomitan has had its limits in recovering the Japanese and U.S. alliance's deficits that continue to endanger residents' *individual* human rights. Even though parachute training is no longer conducted there, in November 2009, a hit-and-run incident within the former Yomitan Auxiliary Airfield revealed the insecurity and humiliation villagers still live with, in relation to the U.S. military. A 66-year-old Yomitan man was killed while jogging just before six in the morning in a hit-and-run accident on the road extending across the Airfield (Figure 2). The driver, an Army sergeant in his late 20s, was arrested and persecuted locally in the Japanese court. According to the U.S. - Japanese Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA, Article XVII), the Japanese have the primary jurisdiction for incidents caused by U.S. military personnel during off-duty hours.

Yomitan people and other Okinawan residents were deeply infuriated at this incident; the U.S. independent military newspaper *Stars and Stripes* (10 March 2010) analysis of the incident '*drew fire from Okinawans because [the driver] refused to be questioned by Japanese police and prosecutors*' and, furthermore, SOFA exempted the sergeant from being '*handed over to Japanese authorities until he was indicted*'. Indeed, the outrage was severe, evidenced by a group of Yomitan villagers who staged a hunger strike in front of the gate of Torii Station. Just how abusive and humiliating the incidents involving U.S. military drivers are for the locals is hard for the outsiders to fully comprehend without at least a minimal background understanding I am providing below.

2. SOFA and the distinction between individual and collective rights

In a highly militarized society – in a 'condensed' space like Okinawa in particular - there many personal interactions occur between the military members and local civilians across the fence. Whilst most of them are of a positive and harmless nature, petty as well as heinous crimes do occur on- and off-base.

Local women's advocates in East Asia, for example, believe that '*the many acts of violence committed by U.S. military personnel against local women and children...happen far too often to be overlooked or accepted as random occurrences or aberrations*' (cited in Kirk and Francis 2000: 246).

Driving in Okinawa, in particular for young U.S. military members, is tricky. Traffic rules (driving on the left lane instead of the right, much lower speed limits) are different, signs are mostly written in Japanese and other motorists are not fluent in English (and Americans, of course, usually speak little Japanese). Okinawan roads are extremely narrow and intricate even by Japanese standards. Besides, the Americans drive huge military trucks, humvees and much bigger vehicles off-base (locals and Japanese tourists predominantly choose much smaller cars appropriate for the road size) (Figure 2). The traffic incidents, which, not surprisingly, are common in Okinawa, guarantee complicated procedures involving the local police and the U.S. military police. Local residents, who know of the U.S. and Japanese governments' SOFA arbitrary and politically motivated interpretations, are thus subjected to insecurity and not treated as dignified humans.

The focal point of local residents' opposition to SOFA in Japan (particularly Okinawa) is that the *individual* rights of the American military members are warranted at the expense of local residents' *individual* right to be protected from harm by laws and regulations equally applied to all (Caron 1999:17). Between the U.S. and its allies, SOFAs prescribe the status of military members deployed in foreign countries regarding land lease, customs, taxes and jurisdiction of soldiers among others. SOFA between the U.S. and Japan, established in 1960, is modelled after the SOFA between the U.S. and other NATO member countries. It warrants the right of U.S. members of the military to be exempted from the local legal and social systems of Japan, where most are unfamiliar with the language, society and culture. The most prominent threat to local residents is the SOFA-based extra-territorial jurisdiction given to those U.S. military members who commit crimes in Japan. On principle, this all sounds straightforward but it is hardly so.

The U.S. rationale for extra-territorial jurisdiction in Japan is to protect the *individual* rights of the soldiers, civilians and their families belonging to the U.S. military vis-à-vis the Japanese system of law and order. The Japanese system does not offer the same *individual* rights U.S. law does to the accused. Scholars explain that the Japanese legal system places greater importance on confessions as part of the social correction processes of criminals (Foote 1992). This emphasis on *social* rehabilitation seems to compromise the *individual* rights of the accused. The emphasis the police place on extracting confession during crime investigation is noted as leading to sub-standard human rights practices. For obtaining confessions from the accused, the police rely on mental and physical coercion, which even involves the practice of using food, bathroom breaks and sleep during prolonged interrogation as bargaining chips. The rights to legal counsel and to be informed of their charges (known as



Figure 3

A public road in
Kadena Town,
Okinawa,

November 2010,

photograph taken
by the author

the *Miranda* rights in the U.S.) are hardly practiced in Japan (Norman 1996:725-29; 737). *Stars and Stripes* (January 14, 2010) reports that the father of the driver who hit the Yomitan jogger and left him unattended is “very concerned about his son being in a foreign land dealing with a government that does not offer the same rights to its citizens as we do in the U.S.” In consideration of the alleged exceptionality of the Japanese legal system, the U.S. makes particular efforts to exempt U.S. military personnel from being subjected to the Japanese legal system. But aren’t the Japanese individuals entitled to the *Miranda* rights too? This question, however, is not a focal point of SOFA.

The double standard justified by SOFA results in differential treatment of the U.S. military members who committed crimes in local communities: they are more likely acquitted or subjected to non-judicial penalties (salary deduction etc.) within the internal system of U.S. military jurisdiction and in military courts, details of which are usually not made known to non-U.S. civilians (including the victims of crimes and their families) (Cha 2010:503-506). For example, when local or non-U.S. women in Okinawa are raped, sexually assaulted or abused in other ways by U.S. military members or their families, they are less likely to expect fair results by placing charges. The commanding officers hold the authority to decide whether the offence was committed during military duties, in which case the U.S. has the primary jurisdiction. The officers can also request the Japanese government to waive Japan’s primary jurisdiction, when the offence is committed off-duty and only punishable by the Japanese law (Caron 1999:17; Cha 2010:503).⁵ Accused U.S. military personnel are also not held in Japanese custody before formal indictment, which gives greater opportunity for repatriation or transfer, after which the local police and victims cannot follow-up. Therefore, ‘a successful U.S. military prosecution for crimes of sexual violence...is difficult for a victimized

woman from a host country to obtain’ as they would be barred from the U.S. military court system, where they are unfamiliar with the language and culture anyway (Caron 1999:14). The deciding factor is the lack of political will of the Japanese government to deny U.S. commanding officers’ sole and arbitrary discretion to treat the matter internally within the military system (Caron 1999:14). By giving favourable treatment to the U.S., the Japanese government has abrogated the responsibility to protect local residents’ human rights.⁶

The rights of individuals with two different citizenships are at odds here, mostly in favour of the rights of a U.S. citizen, which is why the demand to amend SOFA has been made by human rights lawyers, for example in Korea (Smith 2006:16). It is too often overlooked that Japan also violates the individual human rights of their own citizens, in the process of sustaining unequal jurisdiction in favour of those from the U.S. The Japanese state thus neglects its responsibility to ‘*guarantee its citizens equal protection under the law*’ stated in Article 26 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (Caron 1999:17). Often SOFAs are debated in terms of U.S. infringements of the host countries’ sovereignty, for example, of Japan, Korea and Iraq (Cha 2010). Indeed, host country citizens’ initial outrages against crimes committed by the U.S. troops against local individual persons usually quickly segue into the outrage at *collective* abuse of ‘Okinawa’, ‘Japan’ or ‘Korea’. In this process, the lack of individual rights and the problematic legal environment within the social and legal system of host countries is overlooked.

Another question that is not explored sufficiently in this context is how best are individuals’ rights – including women’s rights as human rights – promoted in the process of community development? SOFA is not just about sovereignty and unequal U.S.-Japan relations; prejudice and abuses of local women who fraternize with U.S. military members in local societies too often prohibit them to take their cases to

court. Considering rape of and violence against women and children of the military are highly politicised in Okinawa, it is disturbing that women's rights as human rights remains a specialist concern of local women's advocacy groups; it has not been sufficiently incorporated in the process of community development even in Yomitan.

Conclusion: individual/collective human rights and community development

Residents living near U.S. military bases often suffer from the environmental and social hazards that are inevitable by-products of their operations, such as noises, accidents, crimes and possibilities of contamination. Vieques Island in Puerto Rico, which the U.S. Navy occupied and where it conducted training until 2000, '[u]nfortunately...unlike Kahoolawe in Hawaii or most other American naval gunnery ranges, was populated' (Calder 2007:176). From the military's perspective, if the military bases are located in non-populated surroundings, there will be no considerations necessary for causing danger or inconvenience to residents. But when 'unfortunately' the surroundings are populated, issues to do with human rights – of a collective nature – arise. The question is: *what kind of people and community?* For the people living near U.S. military bases, community development is essential for protecting the collective rights: to demonstrate that '*humans worthy of respect live here*'. This is what Yomitan village has done extremely well.

However, in Yomitan, no less than elsewhere in Okinawa, individuals feel they are treated in an undignified way and thus do not feel safe in the presence of the U.S. forces. It is after car accidents that local citizens most vividly know their being in a colonial status. This is just one of the ways how '*American imperialism actually works*' (Johnson 2006:171).

I argue that it is necessary to clearly distinguish between the *individual* and *collective* nature of human rights at stake near U.S. military outposts and activities. The *individual* rights of local residents that could be threatened by the U.S. military presence, in sum, include to live in safety and to be treated with fairness, dignity and respect. This article has discussed Yomitan's relative success in advancing collective human rights in the process of community development in Okinawa. Its experience, nevertheless, also highlights the weak link between *individual* human rights and community development.

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(Endnotes)

- Okinawa Prefecture consists of hundreds of islands of the Ryukyu Archipelago. The Ryukyu Kingdom was a small tributary state of China, encompassing the islands in the Ryukyu Archipelago. Since 1609, the Shimazu clan of Kyushu invaded the Kingdom and subjugated it under its rule; nevertheless, the kingdom kept nominal independence until 1879, when Japan annexed it as its southern border territory, the Okinawa prefecture.
- These include Hokkaido, Kurile Islands, Taiwan and Korea and the Pacific Islands.
- The government accused the mayor's behaviour for interfering with diplomatic and security affairs consequently that only the central government had the authority to deal with (Yamauchi 2007 118).
- See (The Special Action Committee on Okinawa (SACO) 1996).
- See U.S. Department of Defense, DIR. No. 5525.1, Status of Forces Policy and Information section 4.5, 1979, available at <http://www.dtic.mil/whs/directives/corres/pdf/552501p.pdf> Accessed 1/5/2011.
- High profile cases, such as that of the 1995 rape incident of a child in Okinawa and the death of two Korean girls run over by a U.S. military tank, usually affect both publicity and leniency of sentences to favour the locals' sentiments (Cha 2010:506-508).